

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-34 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the Abstract, specification, and claims 1, 3-4, 6, 9-14 and 16-19 are amended, claims 20-34 are added, and claim 15 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. The Abstract and specification are amended to improve their clarity. No new matter is added. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims, and the drawings. Allowance in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 1-8 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) thereof under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The amendments made to independent claim 1 are responsive to the Examiner's comments, and thus claims 1-8 are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is also thanked for the indication that claims 10, 15, and 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The allowable subject matter of claim 15 has been incorporated into independent claim 13. Accordingly, independent claim 13 is in condition for allowance, along with claims 14 and 16-19 which depend therefrom. However, for the reasons set forth below, claims 10 and 19 have not been rewritten in independent form at this time.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth above, the amendments made to independent claim 1 are responsive to the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1, as well as claims 2-8, which depend therefrom, meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and thus the rejection should be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 9 and 11-12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by either Mercer, U.S. Patent No. 3,989,054 (hereinafter "Mercer"), or Mayers, U.S. Patent No. 4,673,441 (hereinafter "Mayers"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 9 recites, *inter alia*, a filter self-cleansing device configured to perform a self-cleansing operation on the filter, wherein the filter self-cleansing device comprises a spraying portion disposed outside the filter and configured to spray washing water supplied by the first section of the pump onto the filter so as to dislodge particles accumulated on the filter. Neither Mercer nor Mayers discloses or suggests such features.

Mercer discloses a water distribution system for a dishwasher 20, with an upper rack 52 and a lower rack 32 positioned within a wash tub 24, and a pump and motor assembly 28 having a recirculation portion 66 and a drain portion 68 positioned below a molded bottom surface 26 of the tub 24. A first spray arm 30 positioned beneath the lower rack 32 sprays wash water

upwardly onto the lower rack 32, and a second spray arm 54 mounted above the upper rack 54 sprays wash water down onto the upper rack 52. A spray tower 34 attached to the spray arm 30 extends through the lower rack 32 and up to a position just below the upper rack 52 to spray wash water upwardly onto the upper rack 52.

A basin portion 60 and a circular filter housing 69 formed in the bottom surface 26 of the tub 24 are connected to either of two outlets 62 and 64, and conduits 65 and 130 connect outlets 62 and 64 to the recirculation portion 66 and drain portion 68 of the assembly 28. A conical screen filter 70 is interposed between the basin 60 and the outlet 64 to trap particulates in the recirculated water. Soiled wash water flows along a channel 72 to the circular housing 69 for filter 70. The centrifugal forces generated due to the clockwise swirling action induced by the tangential approach of the water and its descent toward outlet 62 forces sediment towards the walls of circular housing 69, minimizing clogging of the screen 70. A backwash spray device 74 positioned within the filter 70 rotates counterclockwise and tends to flush collected sediment from the filter 70. The action of the backwash spray device 74, together with the action of the water from tangential channel 72 strips any collected sediment from the screen. Mercer uses the clockwise motion of the drain water, in conjunction with the counterclockwise motion induced from the backwash spray device 74 positioned within the filter 70 to remove sediment from the screen, and does not disclose or suggest a spraying portion disposed outside the filter and

configured to spray wash water supplied by the pump onto the filter so as to dislodge particles accumulated on the filter.

Mayers discloses a dishwasher whose cleaning cycles are automatically controlled based on the level of soil in the wash water. Mayers' dishwasher 50 includes a wash chamber 55 which houses upper and lower racks 51 and 52, respectively, spray arms 60, and pump housing 58 positioned in an opening formed in a sump 56 at the bottom of the tank 54. The pump housing 58 houses both a recirculating pump 65 and a drain pump 66. An inlet 72 to the recirculating pump 65 is protected by a main filter screen 74 and prevents large food soil from entering the recirculating pump 65.

Washing fluid is pumped by the recirculating pump 65 to the spray arms 60, where it is sprayed out through holes in the spray arms 60 onto dishes positioned on the racks 51 and 52, and then flows down toward the sump 56. The fluid then passes through the recirculating pump inlet 72, where it is strained through the main filter screen 74, leaving the larger food soil particles in the sump 56. Mayers neither discloses nor suggests a spraying portion disposed outside the main filter and configured to spray wash water onto the main filter so as to dislodge the food soil accumulated on the main filter.

Further, the drain pump 66 pumps fluid from the sump 56 through a soil collecting inlet 80 along a soil collecting channel 102, and into a soil collection chamber 120. As the chamber 120 is filled, fluid exits the chamber 120 through a fluid outlet 128 covered by a fine filter screen

126, while the food soil remains in the chamber 120. The fluid outlet 128 is enclosed by a shroud 142 which has a rotatable portion attached to the spray arms 60, and a fixed portion attached to the main screen 74. Orifices 158 formed in an inner member 144 of the shroud 142 are positioned above the fine filter screen 126. These orifices 158 form spray jets to clean the fine filter screen 126 and flush the soil collection chamber 120. The orifices 158 are designed simply to spray down onto the fine filter screen 126, and Mayers does not disclose or suggest that these orifices 158 in any way clear the main filter screen 74 of accumulated food soil.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 9 is not anticipated by either Mercer or Mayers, and thus the rejection of independent claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over either Mercer or Mayers should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 11-12 are allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 9, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

The Office Action rejects claims 13-14 and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Bertsch et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,730,805 (hereinafter "Bertsch"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The allowable subject matter of claim 15 has been incorporated into independent claim 13. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 13 is allowable over Bertsch, and thus the rejection of independent claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Bertsch should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 14 and 16-18 are allowable at least for the reasons

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discussed above with respect to independent claim 13, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

New claims 22-25 are added to the application. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 22-35 also define over the applied references and meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112.

CONCLUSION

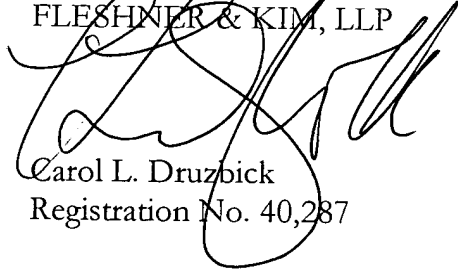
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **Carol L. Druzback**, at the telephone number listed below.

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To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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